



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana

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IM Weekly Highlights



- Motorola will be performing functionality testing at Scobey, Culbertson, Windy Hill and Gideon sites next week. This leaves only the Plentywood site to be completed before the Northern Tier can accept the total Motorola portion of the project.
- MACo President Carl Seilstad, PSSB Bureau Chief Carl Hotvedt, and IM Executive Director Kevin Bruski attended a two-day Statewide Interoperability Coordinators conference, sponsored by the National Governors Association and the Office of Emergency Communications. The main topic of the conference was "Governance of Shared Interoperability Communications Systems". More than 50 states and territories were in attendance.
- Phase 1 of the PSIC IJ-1 microwave project (from Mac Pass to Timberline) goes to the vendor for quote.

PSSB Highlights

- The 2009 Nov./Dec. Issue of Emergency Number Professional Magazine (published by NENA) contains a comprehensive article about the State of Montana's successful migration to NG9-1-1. Your HAM editor recommends taking a "look see"!

Roger, the Radio Guy

By Reporter Angela Brandt angela.brandt@helenair.com
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Roger Hays found working for Boeing a bit too stressful. Then, his "retirement job" at the Port of Seattle was a tad too boring. But, he found his position as Lewis and Clark County radio system administrator to be just right.

Hays, better known as "Roger the radio guy," has worked for the county about a year and a half. He is in charge of maintaining eight remote radio sites, including one at the law enforcement center and one on Nob Hill and six mountain sites. The radio system is for law enforcement, public works and transit, fire departments and emergency personnel.

The site he most often attends to is Stonewall Mountain outside of Lincoln, which can be a fun task in the summer but an arduous job in the snow.

"I love being up there 10 times more than being down here," he said while sitting in his office at the law

enforcement center. "I wouldn't change my job for the world." "The only time you hear me complaining is when Stonewall fails in December," Hays said, adding that it is not uncommon to have steady winds of 100 mph at the site.

During the winter months, Hays does more indoor activities like maintaining the master site or helping officers with handheld radio issues. Many sites he can drive to in the warmer months can only be accessed by snowmobile in the winter. Luckily, he only has to go to the mountain sites about once a month when they're snow covered.

Hays has had some interesting and a few hairy moments while on the job. One time while riding a snowmobile along frozen tracks to tend to Stonewall, he came across a bull and female moose during the most dangerous time of rutting season. "I came around the corner and thought 'I'm dead,'" he said. Hays just put his head down, kept on going and hoped for the best. It all worked out fine. "That was a little spooky," he said.

Bears are another on-the-job hazard. While Hays has not had an up-close-and-person experience, he is always on the lookout. The doors on the Stonewall site are affixed with spikes in an attempt to keep grizzly bears out of the facility.



Lisa Kunkel Independent Record - Roger Hays, Lewis and Clark County radio system administrator, talks about the master control radio site in the law enforcement center Wednesday.

Hays relocated to Montana when he was hired as the first technologist for Motorola, where he worked about five years. When the previous Lewis and Clark County radio administrator left, Hays, who had worked closely with the county, was offered the position.

He chose to go with the county to slow down the travel demands. Hays appreciates having more time to spend with his daughter Keisha, 17, and his wife of 19 years, Maria.

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For Motorola, he was traveling not only all over the state but also to Alaska, Washington and Arizona. Hays said he also enjoys working with the county officials. "It's been a really good job move," he said.

Sheriff Leo Dutton agreed. "Roger was a major steal," Dutton said. "The technological knowledge he has is unrivaled on this radio system. He's not only a benefit to Lewis and Clark County but also the state of Montana with his knowledge and experience."

Hays is often loaned to agencies all over Montana to help with their radio systems. He also maintains the master site for the entire state. Hays recently was awarded radio frequency technologist of the year by the Montana Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials.

Dutton said Hays is very conscientious and an extremely hard worker. "He's fun to be around and has a great sense of humor," the sheriff added. His coworkers are fans of his bubbly personality.

"He's very easy to talk to," his immediate supervisor Undersheriff David Rau said. "In addition to that, he takes his job serious, he really does. You could say he's a perfectionist."

When not working, Hays not surprisingly enjoys the outdoors. He adores fishing, snowmobiling, camping and pretty much anything he can do in the woods. His job is well suited to him. "I'm not an indoor person at all," he added.

This story and photos are available at: http://www.helenair.com/lifestyles/community/article_a_b204d2c-e0a4-11de-aa1b-001cc4c03286.html

IM Technical Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Bob McWilliams, IMTC Chair, began the Mon., Nov. 23 meeting of the IM Technical Committee in Helena with sub-committee reports on frequencies, encryption, network connectivity and maintenance costs. Members were notified that NEPAs will be performed on the Belle Prairie, Antelope Butte and Fox Creek sites. Kevin Bruski, IM Executive Director, indicated that funding is available for installation of trunking as part of a Motorola contract for the following sites: Big Mountain, Butte 9-1-1, Greycliff, Pinkham, South Moccasin and Sullivan.

Bob reported that all concrete work for sites on the Southwest Loop was completed this fall except for the Sawtell site. The tower and infrastructure work is complete at Bull Mountain, with some remaining clean up items pending. Roger Hays said that Motorola Firmware version 12 is working well. Frank Smith, Gallatin County, described some recent issues experienced in the new Gallatin County TrESAP/9-1-1 Center. Members also discussed fleet mapping, radio inventories and concrete sampling issues.

Under consortium reports, Mike Linder, Big Sky 11, reported that the next meeting will be Jan. 28, and county commissioners will be invited. Kerry O'Connell, Sweet Grass County, said that the South Central Montana Interoperability Communications Consortium has voted to hold its meetings every other month. Its next meeting is Jan. 13 in Livingston.

The next IMTC meeting is scheduled for Mon., Dec. 21, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, at the MACo offices, 2715 Skyway Drive, in Helena.

Tri-County Consortium Meeting

By Dan Sullivan dsullivan@mt.gov

The Tri-County Consortium met at the offices of Interoperability Montana on Wed., Nov. 25 in Helena. Progress reports were given on Bull Mountain, which is nearly complete. Concrete will be poured the first week of December, weather permitting, at Limestone Hills. The buy-sell agreement and survey for the XL Heights site are complete. The land transaction will be completed soon, pending action by the Title Company.

Members discussed the Boulder Hill site, which is a strategic radio link not only for Jefferson County, but also for Lewis and Clark County and the Montana Departments of Corrections, Transportation, and Justice (Highway Patrol). This site has a shelter and pad as well as generator and propane concrete foundations, but does not have a tower, generator or propane tank. Participants spoke about how to get the Boulder Hill site higher on the IM Project funding list.

The group also discussed reviewing the consortium's by-laws and having an election of officers.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Dec. 7 (Mon.)**
IM Finance Committee
Helena • 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Dec. 7 (Mon.)**
IM Governance Committee
Helena • 1:00 - 5:00 pm
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Dec. 8 (Tues.)**
IM Project Directors
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Large Conference Rm., Lower Level
2715 Skyway Drive
- **Dec. 16 (Wed.)**
Eastern Tier Consortium
Glendive • 10:00 am
Location to be Announced
- **Dec. 17 (Thurs.)**
I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am
Butte Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George St.